

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 04126 122306Z
ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INR-07 PA-02 PRS-01 ARA-14 /037 W
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FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO USINFO WASHDC IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 4009

UNCLAS WELLINGTON 04126

FOR IOR, IBS, IPS

EO 11652: N/A
SUBJECT: PANAMA CANAL MEDIA REACTION

1. UNDER THE HEADING "NEW TIMES AT PANAMA," THE COUNTRY'S LARGEST PAPER, THE NEW ZEALAND "HERALD", SEPTEMBER 12, COMMENTED IN ITS LEAD EDITORIAL:
2. "PRESIDENT CARTER MAY WELL HAVE RECOGNIZED THE INEVITABLE BY SIGNING TREATIES THAT WOULD ABANDON AMERICAN CONTROL OVER THE PANAMA CANAL...
3. "SEVERAL QUESTIONS ARISE. THE MOST IMMEDIATE IS PROBABLY WHETHER MR CARTER HAS ANY HOPE OF PERSUADING THE SENATE TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSED TRANSFER OF CONTROL ...
4. "A SECOND QUESTION IS WHETHER THE PANAMANIAN STRONGMAN, GENERAL TORRIJOS, DOES, IN FACT, HAVE THE STRENGTH TO MAKE HIS COUNTRY-MEN ACCEPT WHAT MUST SEEM TO THEM AN INORDINATE DELAY IN RESTORING THEIR TERRITORY. IN 1903 PANAMA GRANTED THE UNITED STATES EXCLUSIVE CONTROL OF A CANAL ZONE IN PERPETUITY. BUT WITH THE WAY THE WORLD IS MOVING 'PERPETUITY' IS MORE LIKELY TO BE WELL ON

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THIS SIDE OF THE YEAR 2000.

5. "IF PERPETUITY CAN BE SO SHORT A TIME, WHAT PRICE THE PERMANENCE OF THE 'PERMANENT' NEUTRALITY PROMISED UNDER THE CARTER AGREEMENT? WITH THE CANAL UNDER UNITED STATES CONTROL, THE WORLD CAN BE REASONABLY SURE THAT SPECIAL-INTEREST PRESSURE GROUPS WOULD HAVE NO INFLUENCE OVER THE

USE OF THE WATERWAY. BUT WITH THE CANAL UNDER PANAMA'S CONTROL, A POSSIBILITY MUST BE FACED THAT OUTSIDE PRESSURES OR PANAMANIAN PREJUDICES COULD MORE EASILY LEAD TO RESTRICTIONS AGAINST SELECTED NATIONS.

6. "NEW ZEALAND, AS A SHIPPER THROUGH THE CANAL AND AS THE SUBJECT OF A PRESSURE CAMPAIGN OVER SPORTING CONTACTS, CAN SCARCELY OVERLOOK THE POINT...

7. "NEW ZEALAND, PLAINLY, IS INTERESTED IN MAINTAINING FREEDOM OF PASSAGE. HER PANAMA POLICY IS EQUALLY PLAIN: TO SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS FOR NEUTRALITY OF THE CANAL AND UNIVERSAL ACCESS TO IT." ANDERSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 12-Sep-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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SAS ID: 1301862
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TAGS: EWWT, SOPN, US, PN, PQ, NZ
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